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FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8645  
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 1827  
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE IMMEDIATE 1397  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP IMMEDIATE  
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE IMMEDIATE 2240  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1625  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BISHKEK 001710

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/05/2016  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [MARR](#) [ASEC](#) [KG](#)  
SUBJECT: PM KULOV: CAUTIOUSLY MOVING FORWARD IN A NEW ERA

REF: A. BISHKEK 1705  
[1](#)B. BISHKEK 1621

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Classified By: Amb. Marie L. Yovanovitch, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Ambassador met with Prime Minister Kulov November 30 to discuss a range of issues. Kulov called the new constitution "flawed" and said that the president emerged as the "big winner." He expressed little faith in the political opposition, saying they were disunited and corrupt. He said that Bakiyev would address parliament December 4 and urge the deputies to pass stalled legislation; if the deputies did not act, "anything" would be possible, including dissolving parliament. Kulov said that public and parliamentary opinion was very strong that the U.S. was at fault for the collision at Manas Airport and should provide compensation. Kulov said that he favored joining the HIPC initiative, but Kyrgyzstan would join only if the government determined it would be in the country's interest. END SUMMARY.

#### Current Political Situation

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[1](#)2. (C) Kulov said that he did not view the new constitution as a big accomplishment. He had preferred a different version that he had hoped would be passed. The new constitution, he said, is flawed and "much needs to be changed." He added that it is not good when things are done in such a hurry.

[1](#)3. (C) Contrary to some analysts' views, Kulov believes that the PM does not acquire more powers under the new constitution. Kulov said that it is the President who is the big winner. Presidential powers remain the same, and President still appoints the PM. Therefore, under Kyrgyz conditions, "the Prime Minister will always be that person the president needs." Kulov said that in Kyrgyzstan today, political parties are not strong or well developed, but the new constitution gives them an important role in the parliament. He said that Bakiyev would be able to field the strongest party, and even if his party does not win the majority, if the majority party fails to form a government,

he can then ask any party to form a government.

¶4. (C) During the early November demonstrations, Kulov said he told the Opposition not to focus on personalities. He said that his own role during this period was to assure that whatever happened was peaceful and that there was no North-South divide. Kulov said that the Opposition wanted to take over the White House and other critical points, and he told them that while he was for reform, he wanted this to be done peacefully. He claimed opposition leader Almaz Atambayev said that even if 1000 people die, it would be worth it, because we "have to take power." Kulov said he replied that he would not support this, to which Atambayev said "then you are supporting the south over the north." Kulov said that may be, but power at such a cost is worth nothing. He said he told the Opposition that even if they came to power, they would fail, because they did not have a unified view and they were corrupt. Kulov predicted that if the Opposition did come to power, he (Kulov) would be back in power within 2-3 years, because he would be needed.

¶5. (C) Looking to the future, Kulov said the President would go to Parliament December 4 and ask the deputies to pass about 50 pending laws covering economic development and other measures needed to implement the constitution. If the parliamentarians did not act, the PM said "anything was possible," including dissolution of parliament. He noted, however, that the President cannot just write a decree dissolving parliament; this has to be done according to the law and the constitution. Kulov said that there are "many possibilities in the law" to dissolve parliament. Somewhat contradictorily, Kulov also said that that the only possibility to dissolve parliament and the best way forward would be for Kulov himself to resign. He said he was prepared to do this, but the President did not want him to

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go. Kulov concluded that dissolution of the parliament was not the most likely scenario.

Harassment of NDI/IRI/IFES  
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¶6. (C) The Ambassador raised concerns about the Prosecutor General's investigation into the activities of NDI, IRI, and IFES, and she passed Kulov a copy of the diplomatic note the Embassy had sent requesting an explanation for the investigation. Kulov said he was unaware of the situation and claimed the government had nothing to do with it, that the PG has higher powers to review what is happening and even change government decisions. He added that the PG does not report to the PM under the new constitution. (Comment: On December 1, Deputy Chief of Staff Sadyrkulov told Ambassador that the Prime Minister had agreed that the harassment of USAID grantees must stop and that State Secretary Madumaorv should call the Prosecutor General. End Comment.)

Collision at Manas Airport  
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¶7. (C) The Ambassador told Kulov that our report of the accident at Manas Airport was not yet ready, but we had indications that it would differ from the Kyrgyz report. The Ambassador said we want to share the report before it is released to the press and want to lay out a way forward. She said it would be important to work together constructively.

¶8. (C) Kulov said that public opinion and parliamentary opinion was very strong that the U.S. was at fault and that the U.S. should provide compensation. The Ambassador noted that the public/parliament might not have all the facts, and we also have a parliament that watches such issues; it was best to try to work on this together. Kulov suggested that we not make our report public, but try to work together to find a compromise. The Ambassador pointed out that the Kyrgyz had already publicly released their report and that

our procedure was to release publicly the findings; moreover we could not leave the misimpression that the U.S. was 100% to blame if that was not the finding.

REMAP

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¶9. (C) The Ambassador outlined for the PM USAID's new Regional Energy Market Assistance Program (REMAP). The Prime Minister was interested, but suggested we wait on a full briefing until the new Ministry of Energy is formed. He expects this to happen before the end of the year. He is very interested, but wants the new ministry to handle this.

HIPC

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¶10. (C) The PM said there is a firestorm around the issue; only two people (himself and the Minister of Finance) are in favor of HIPC. He noted that Kyrgyzstan would only join if it was in their interests, and the President would do whatever the PM advised.

KIDNAPPING OF EMBASSY SPOUSE/SD TEAM

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¶11. (C) Ambassador briefed Kulov on the recent kidnapping of an Embassy spouse (Ref B) and thanked the Prime Minister for the excellent investigative efforts of the MVD. She noted that had the Surveillance Detection (SD) Team been operational at the time of the kidnapping, there might have been a chance to prevent the incident. She asked the Prime Minister to sign an MOU regarding the SD Team and passed a suggested draft. The Prime Minister said he would ask his lawyers to review the document and would get back to the Ambassador.

COMMENT

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¶12. (C) While most agree that the Prime Minister came out ahead with the new constitution, the PM himself is playing this very carefully. He remains a target of the opposition and needs a continued alliance with the President. Ironically, one outcome of the November demonstrations is the strong "tandem" between the President and Prime Minister that everyone had hoped for in 2005. Perhaps this desire not to overplay his hand accounts for the caution the PM displayed in his meeting with the Ambassador. From REMAP to the harassment of USAID democracy grantees, Kulov was attentive and polite but noncommittal. On the September airplane collision at Manas, however, Kulov clearly laid out Kyrgyz expectations; this is significant coming from a consistently strong proponent of the Base.  
YOVANOVITCH